ECAC Review Key:

This document starts with the existing ECAC Operating Principles. A *red italic* question is placed above the related section of the operating principles to denote the specific issues raised at the ECAC retreat. The blue box highlights the operating principle language for potential change. Current thoughts on potential changes are listed in blue after the box.

Wisconsin's Early Childhood Advisory Council
Operating Principles

ECAC Website: http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/default.htm

Retreat Question: How is the ECAC Authorized?

Background:

The Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) was established by Executive Order in November 2008 under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, which required a State Council to be created that would build upon the existing statewide early childhood programs and services. The ECAC builds upon the work of the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP), the Children's Trust Fund Board, Partners for Wisconsin Economic Success, Wisconsin State Birth to 3 Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), and other organizations interested in early childhood education and care.

Possible clarifications to add:
- **Clarify that the Executive Order was continued under the current administration.**

Vision:

Every child will be healthy, nurtured, safe and successful.

Retreat Question: What is the scope of the work and should it be expanded?

Mission:

The mission of the ECAC is to help ensure that all children and families in Wisconsin have access to high quality early childhood programs and services.

Possible clarifications to add:
- **ECAC discussion about scope and focus for birth to 8 may bring some changes to the mission.**

Responsibilities of the ECAC:

• Conducting a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs;

• Identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally- and state-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services;

• Developing recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to under-represented and special populations; and

• Developing recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood providers.

Retreat Question: How is membership decided? How many members? Terms? Are the correct members represented? How to increase Tribal input?

Membership:
Members of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) are appointed by the Governor as per federal requirements and executive order. The Head Start Act of 2007 specified organizations that should be represented. The Governor's appointed Co-Chairs are the Department of Children and Families Secretary and Department of Public Instruction State Superintendent.

Possible clarifications to add:
- **Appointments are made to the Council based on the position the individual is in. There are no term limits or specifications about the number of members. ECAC discussion will occur on the specific membership positions and if recommendations should be made for changes.**
- **Continue cross sector work with Tribal communities and define ways to increase communication and input.**

Meetings:
The ECAC will meet as often as necessary but, not less than four (4) times per calendar year. Minutes will be kept of all ECAC meetings and will be approved by the ECAC at a subsequent ECAC meeting. The minutes will be posted online at the ECAC website for viewing by the public and members.

Substitutions:
When ECAC members are not available to attend a particular meeting:

• The members may send a representative to enable the constituency to have representation at the meetings. Substitutes for ECAC members shall not have voting privileges. Members who are sending a substitute will send notification to the ECAC staff indicating who the representative will be.

• When a member is absent or elects to send a substitute, it will be counted as an absence on part of the member. Reoccurring absences may result in a withdrawal of appointment.

Voting:
• Each ECAC member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.

- A vote of the majority present at any meeting is necessary to approve an action taken by the ECAC.
- In the event of a tie vote, the ECAC co-chairs will cast a single deciding vote.
- No member of the ECAC will cast a vote on any matter which would provide direct financial benefit to that member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- In the instances where an ECAC member is employed by an organization which is a recipient of financial support from the State of Wisconsin or any affiliates, that member must disclose such potential conflict of interest.

Accountability:
The ECAC annually reports to the Governor on its progress and achievements and identifies future work.

Public Meetings:
The ECAC and Steering Committee meetings are open to the public and will provide an opportunity for public comment.

Retreat Question: Why are non-members separated out from the ECAC during meetings? How can the ECAC do better at getting the word out?

Participation by non-ECAC members:
Non-ECAC members are welcome to attend ECAC meetings. Visitors shall not occupy seats at the ECAC meeting table but will occupy seating available around the sides of the meeting room.

Possible Options:
- **General consensus was to keep the seating structure the same and to continue the practice of including the public in ECAC discussion groups.**
- **Consider ECAC discussion about marketing/branding and if it would lead to changes in the operating principles.**

- An opportunity for public comment will be held during each ECAC meeting. Prior to the beginning of the ECAC meeting, non-ECAC members may sign-up to address the ECAC. Non-ECAC members will be given up to five (5) minutes to speak depending on the number of speakers registered.

Relationship with Other Initiatives:
The ECAC will work with other early childhood initiatives to avoid duplication of efforts. The ECAC may draw from these initiatives' work to inform their deliberations prior to making recommendations.

Retreat Question: How does the agenda get set?

Rules of Order:

Formal action of the ECAC will be conducted by *Robert's Rules of Order* (most recent edition). Additionally, the ECAC will comply with the following rules:

• The ECAC will limit discussion to items on the proposed agenda. Additional agenda items may be submitted to the ECAC staff at least one month in advance of any scheduled meeting. The Steering Committee and the ECAC co-chairs will determine and approve the final ECAC meeting agenda.

• Persons or organizations wishing to address the ECAC may be placed on the agenda by making a request to the ECAC staff at least one month before any scheduled meeting.

Possible revisions/clarifications for Agenda Setting:

- **Co-chairs determine highest priority items for agenda prior to the ECAC meeting.**
- **ECAC Steering Committee recommends agenda items to Co-chairs.**
- **Council members may offer suggestions for ECAC meetings at least 2 months prior to an ECAC scheduled meeting.**

Retreat Question: What is the process for Steering Committee appointment, term length, size limit, how are members replaced?

Structure: Steering Committee –

In 2011, the ECAC combined three existing committees into one Steering Committee. The Steering Committee was made up of the co-chairs of the three previous groups and is appointed by the ECAC co-chairs to serve. The Steering Committee is co-chaired by ECAC members and charged with the following responsibilities:

- Providing ongoing input to current and future funding opportunities
- Coordinating and advancing the work of the ECAC
- Guiding and coordinating the work of ECAC project teams to ensure systemic approaches to ECAC priorities
- Reviewing and assessing all formal recommendations for consideration by the ECAC
- Finalizing ECAC meeting agendas
- Preparing the annual report to the Governor, including draft recommendations for ECAC approval
- Coordinating meetings with project team chairs to ensure needed collaboration and consistency across various domains.

Clarifying process for membership – Possible Options
Options:

- **To reflect evolving nature of the committee, one chair from each project team could be appointed to serve on the Steering Committee or the Steering Committee could meet with both chairs at quarterly meetings;**
- **Plan quarterly meetings of Steering Committee and all project chairs.**
- **Membership on the ECAC Steering Committee is based on the position a person has as a chairperson or former chairperson of the original committees as described below.**

- **Need to articulate process for changing membership.**

Retreat Question: What is the working relationship between/among the project teams and the Steering Committee – how does communication, decision making, agenda-setting happen?

The Steering Committee works closely with the assigned staff and project teams to accomplish ECAC goals and objectives. This reflects a structure that replaces the prior Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners – WECCP Action Team – while retaining the other structures of WECCP.

The Steering Committee works closely with the assigned staff and project teams to accomplish ECAC goals and objectives. This reflects a structure that replaces the prior Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners – WECCP Action Team – while retaining the other structures of WECCP, including the list serve, website, videoconferences and coaches. In addition, the Committee attempts to connect other early childhood stakeholders with the appropriate Project Teams to ensure a comprehensive, quality system of early care and education for Wisconsin's youngest citizens.

Structure: ECAC Project Teams –
Project Teams shall be designated as needed by the ECAC to serve functions specified by the ECAC. Such Project Teams shall exist for periods of time deemed necessary by the charge to the Project Team by the ECAC. A list of the current ECAC Project Teams will be maintained on the official ECAC website.
- The ECAC Steering Committee will help create the project teams' overall purpose statements and offer suggestions for membership.
- A member of the ECAC Steering Committee/Staff Team will be assigned to be a liaison between the ECAC Steering Committee and the Project Team.
- Each project team will have at least two co-chairs representing the public and private sectors. These co-chairs will finalize membership, define key considerations, define reporting processes, and set timelines.
Project Teams will serve to inform and make recommendations to the ECAC. The ECAC will make final decisions. The ECAC Steering Committee determines what reports and recommendations are submitted to the ECAC. The following procedures apply for transmitting recommendations and findings from teams to the ECAC:
- Project Teams submit reports to the ECAC Steering Committee;
- the Steering Committee determines if report goes to the ECAC; and
- ECAC will decide whether to approve the committee recommendation and/or adopt the recommendation as that of the ECAC.
Efforts will be made to create a balance of ECAC members/designees and non-members serving on Project Teams. Each project teams will consist of membership from:
o within the ECAC members/designees
o related program areas with state departments
o relevant agencies and associations
o established input groups

o other stakeholders

Retreat Question: How does the cross-department staff team operate with respect to the ECAC. Relationship on visual diagram in principles is confusing.

Structure: Cross Department Staff Resources

In 2012, each state department identified a list of department staff to serve as resources to support the work of the ECAC and the Project Teams. These Cross Department Staff Resources will:

- Reduce fragmented activities and promote interagency coordination and collaboration
- Support the ECAC Steering committee and various committees
- Align work of ECAC and departments
- Maximize state resources, reduce duplication, and identify gaps

Staff Role

Expectations for staff include that they:

- attend all ECAC meetings
- Ensure that minutes are taken and distributed
- Make necessary meeting arrangements;
- assisting ECAC members in reimbursement of expenses; supporting the Steering Committee and Project Teams and other duties as needed by the ECAC.

Staff is not eligible to vote on any matters of official ECAC business.

Possible options:
- Take the box out of the chart
- Specify staff with direct involvement
- Strengthen the role of additional state agency staff as links between their departments, the Project teams and the ECAC
- Ensure graphic in existing Operating Principles reflects how system work, proposal for new graphic will be developed and shared in December along with Operating Principles proposed updates.